

Appendix C: EIA Screening

Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017 - Screening Opinion

Site: 44 London Road West Amersham Buckinghamshire HP7 9DD
Reference: PL/21/1309/FA

Development Description	Demolition of existing buildings, and erection of a foodstore (Use class E) with servicing, access, car parking and landscaping.
Schedule 1 Development ?	No
Schedule 2 Development?	Yes
If Yes, what section:	Section 10(b): Urban development projects.
In a 'Sensitive Area' ?:	No – but the site is adjacent to a sensitive area (Chiltern AONB)
Does it Meet the Relevant Threshold/Criteria in Schedule 2, Column 2:	No – the site is less than 1ha
CONSIDERATIONS:	The local planning authority needs to consider whether this schedule 2 development is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, scale or location taking into account the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and the characteristics of the potential impact.

Characteristics of the development:

The site area comprises approx. 0.66 hectares. The development proposal is for construction of a new supermarket, with GEA of 1,998sqm, with associated car parking, hard and soft landscaping and an access from London Road West.

The site is previously developed with areas of hardstanding associated with the former use of the land as a car showroom.

The site contains a two-storey building located adjacent to the eastern boundary and is currently vacant.

The development would result in a permanent change in character of the site from the existing site condition.

As such views across the site would locally change as a result of new built form and there would be vehicle movements associated with the development.

The use of natural resources such as land, soil and water will not be significant.

The waste materials produced would occur mainly during the construction and operation of the development.

Any waste produced would be of the same nature as other similar developments and would be subject to appropriate controls either through the planning regime or via other legislation.

Standard working practices will be implemented during construction to reduce pollution and development nuisance to a minimum.

The nature of the development does not carry a risk of major accidents and/or disasters. Given the nature of the development there will be negligible risk to human health from water contamination.

The proposals would result in an increase in vehicular movements to/from the site, and other associated activities which have the potential to cause disturbance/nuisance, however the scale of the development is not such as to trigger EIA development.

Location of the development:

The Chiltern District Local Plan does not identify any policy designations for the site. The site is located within the built-up settlement of Amersham and contains vacant building associated with the former use of the site as a car showroom.

The site contains areas of hardstanding associated with its previous use and is relatively flat in terms levels.

There are residential properties to the west of the site located on Washington Row.

A mix of retail and residential uses are located on the north side of London Road West opposite the site.

While the land immediately to the east is undeveloped.

The environmental sensitivity of the site is considered to be generally low. However, it is recognised that the site is located adjacent to the River Misbourne

Due to the nature and size of the development it is considered that matters relating to the impact upon biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape features can be appropriately considered through the application process without the requirement to trigger EIA development.

The site is not located within an area of designated landscape, biodiversity, historical, cultural or archaeological significance. However, the site abuts a designated landscape and a number of heritage assets. These impacts, due the scale of the development could be addressed through the application process without the need to trigger EIA development.

Characteristics of potential impact:

The proposal would result in a developed appearance to the site, but the small scale nature of the development would limit the scope for significant impact with any impacts deemed likely to be local. Furthermore, the urban context of the development means the surrounding area is likely to be capable of absorbing a development of this scale without any significant impacts, subject to appropriate design and landscaping.

Due to the nature of the development proposed, there are likely to be potential impacts associated with the development with regard to the impact upon the highway network and/or congestion on the local road network including the nearby. However, given the scale and nature of the proposal this is unlikely to be significant to justify an

Environmental Impact Assessment.

The location is adjacent to a sensitive area, and views of the site can be seen from the adjacent AONB, located to the south and east side of the site. The impact on views will likely be limited and the lie of the land and existence of adjacent buildings would also serve to minimise the visual impact, subject to detail.

External lighting of the site would also be viewed against a backdrop of an already lit urban area and therefore would not likely have a significant environmental impact.

The site itself does not have any particular historical, cultural or archaeological significance. However, there are a number of designated heritage assets close to the site which can be assessed through the application process.

The impact on biodiversity, together with the impact on any protected fauna and flora, including the River Misbourne (chalk stream) can be considered through the application process, while the development should ensure a measurable net gain in biodiversity.

There is the potential for impacts from the development including matters associated with activities at the site relating to noise and disturbance, and air pollution (arising from the uplift in vehicular movements). While construction noise, dust and fumes could also have an impact. However, given the nature and scale of the development these matters are unlikely to be so significant to justify an Environmental Impact Assessment and are often capable of mitigation.

The development is unlikely to have a material impact on the use of natural resources, the production of waste, pollution or nuisance and would be unlikely to include the use of substances or technologies that could increase the risk of accidents or affect human health or the environment.

As highlighted previously, there is a watercourse on the site which could be affected by the development and the site is located within flood zone 2 and 3, and low, medium and high surface water zones. The development would include sustainable drainage.

The development would result in new employment opportunities at the construction stage but these are unlikely to be significant to trigger an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Overall, when considering other neighbouring development and the location of the development, the proposal would be unlikely to result in a cumulative significant effect on the environment to require an Environmental Statement.

Conclusion:

The National Planning Policy Guidance (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 4-018- 20170728) states that when screening [Schedule 2](#) projects, the local planning authority must take account of the selection criteria in [Schedule 3](#) of the 2017 Regulations. Not all of the criteria will be relevant in every case. Each case should be considered on its own merits in a balanced way.

The Planning Practice Guidance Indicative Screening Thresholds table (Paragraph: 057 Reference ID: 4-057- 2070720) sets out the following indicative criteria and thresholds to help determine whether significant effects are likely for Schedule 2, 10(b) development types:

Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination.

Sites which have not previously been intensively developed:

- (i) area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or
- (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m² of new commercial floorspace;
or
- (iii) the development would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).

The site does not exceed any of the above indicative criteria.

Having taken into account the characteristics of the development, the location of the development, the characteristics of the potential impact and accumulation with other development it is concluded that the proposals are unlikely to have a significant environmental impact. An Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

The applicant is therefore not required to submit an Environmental Statement.

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